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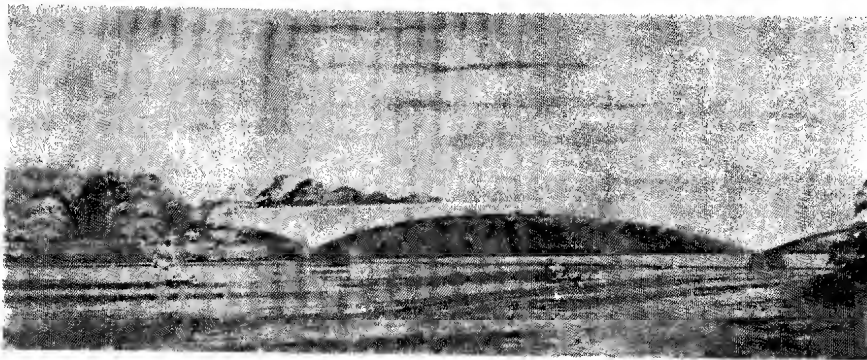
B1

The Washington Post

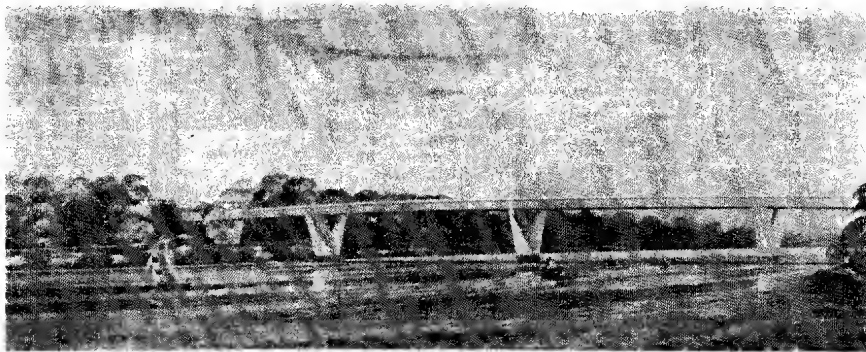
CITY LIFE

Obituaries

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14,



The D.C. highway department has proposed this single-span prestressed concrete bridge, and the Fine Arts Commission has given its approval.



The Federal Highway Administration favors the cheaper steel box girder double-span design shown here for the proposed Three Sisters Bridge.

3 Sisters Bridge Hearing Set Today

SISTERS, From B1

Two different structural designs for the bridge will be considered.

One, with a single long overwater arched span, is endorsed by the D.C. highway department and has been approved by the Fine Arts Commission.

It would be built of pre-stripped concrete. The cost of the six-lane bridge and its approaches would be \$32.3 million, including engineering and right-of-way costs.

An alternative plan costing \$241 million has been advanced by the Department of

Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, which provides the federal government's 90 per cent share of the cost.

That plan would add a pier in the middle of the river, giving the bridge two overwater spans. They would be built of steel.

The first four public witnesses today will be supporters of the bridge, who, the highway department spokesman said, were the earliest to file requests to be heard. As the hearings continue, foes of the bridge predict that their view will predominate.

3 Sisters 'Trial' Will Start Today

By Jack Eisen

Washington Post Staff Writer

A three-day hearing on the design of the Three Sisters Bridge, which begins today, is expected to be used by both its supporters and foes as a forum on whether the span should be built.

"We want to discuss the whole thing," said Grosvenor Chapman, a Washington architect who is chairman of the Committee of 100 on the Fed-

eral City, one of a coalition of civic groups whose law suit led to a suspension of bridge construction last summer.

U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica ruled Aug. 3 that a hearing must be held on the design of the Georgetown-to-Arlington span.

Sirica also ruled that legal requirements on whether and where the bridge should be built had been met. That part of Sirica's ruling is being ap-

pealed by civic groups to the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Chapman wrote to Mayor Walter E. Washington last month requesting that the hearing be postponed until the Appellate Court's ruling is handed down several months from now. He said yesterday that he has received no reply.

The Three Sister Bridge, named for a group of rock outcroppings in the mid-Potomac, has been in dispute for more than a decade. It has become symbolic for a number of controversies around the country over construction of interstate freeways in urban areas.

Congress ordered its prompt construction in the Highway Act of 1968 and withheld Metro appropriations until work began late last year.

The span would be the key part of Interstate 266, providing one of two Washington gateways for Interstate 66, an east-west freeway between the capital and the Northern Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

At a series of state-held hearings last week, many residents of Arlington urged elimination of the I-66 segment inside the Capital Beltway.

The Three Sisters hearing is being conducted jointly by the District of Columbia government and by the Virginia Highway Department, since plans for the Arlington approaches through the Spout Run Valley are being considered.

The bridge approaches in Washington and the connecting Potomac River Freeway along the Georgetown waterfront will not be considered at the hearing.

A spokesman for the D.C. highway department said 102 witnesses are officially scheduled. The marathon session is scheduled to run from 10 a.m. until nearly midnight both today and Tuesday and from 10 a.m. Wednesday until sometime last afternoon. Witnesses not on the official list will be heard after the scheduled testimony is completed.

Today's session will be in the Commerce Department Auditorium, 14th Street between Constitution and Pennsylvania Avenues NW. The Tuesday and Wednesday hearings will be in the Departmental Auditorium, Constitution Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets NW.

The hearing officer will be Julian R. Dugas, D.C. director of economic development.

See SISTERS, B3, Col. 1